

PASSENGERS.

An analysis of the passenger revenue is as follows :—

—				1932.	1931.	Variation.	Per Cent.
Passenger journeys—							
Ordinary .. .. .	..	..	..	6,503,566	7,265,912	—762,346	10·49
Season .. .. .	..	..	..	12,652,034	15,521,144	—2,869,110	18·49
Total .. .. .	..	..	..	19,155,600	22,787,056	—3,631,456	15·94
Revenue—				£	£	£	
Ordinary .. .. .	..	..	..	1,138,940	1,531,376	—392,436	25·63
Season .. .. .	..	..	..	200,649	247,349	—46,700	18·88
Total .. .. .	..	..	..	1,339,589	1,778,725	—439,136	24·69
Passenger train-miles				4,440,491	4,874,650	—434,159	8·91
Revenue—							
Per mile of line .. .. .	..	..	..	£415	£539	—£124	23·00
Per train-mile .. .. .	..	..	..	72·40d.	87·58d.	—15·18d.	17·50

A review of the passenger revenue was made during the year and after a thorough examination of the position it was, as already mentioned in this report, decided to reduce the ordinary fares. Accordingly, as from the 20th September, 1931, the ordinary passenger fares at single rates were reduced by 20 per cent., and for return tickets the holiday-excursion scale was adopted, representing a reduction of approximately 22½ per cent. on the return fares. Prior to this reduction the passenger journeys and revenue at ordinary rates were declining rapidly, and as the following table shows the decline in journeys has now been arrested. The journeys and revenue for ordinary and holiday-excursion fares for the three years ended 31st March, 1930, have been taken as the index figure 100, and in order to allow for the variation in the dates of the Easter holidays the returns for the March and April periods have been amalgamated under one heading.

Period.	Journeys.			Revenue.		
	Average Three Years, 1928, 1929, 1930.	1931.	1932.	Average Three Years, 1928, 1929, 1930.	1931.	1932.
March and April .. .. .	100	83	56	100	93	65
May .. .. .	100	85	59	100	93	67
June .. .. .	100	81	53	100	86	59
July .. .. .	100	83	52	100	88	57
August .. .. .	100	80	51	100	82	55
September .. .. .	100	85	57	100	88	64
October .. .. .	100	76	60	100	77	52
November .. .. .	100	74	65	100	78	53
December .. .. .	100	73	69	100	81	55
January .. .. .	100	69	61	100	77	57
January .. .. .	100	72	73	100	81	64
February .. .. .	100	65	67	100	70	53

From a study of the above table it will be noted that the passenger journeys were falling during the earlier portion of 1931 and the decline became intensified from the middle of that year and continued so until August, 1932, when as a result of the decrease in fares the position began to improve.

Taking all the circumstances of the present economic depression into consideration, the position so far as revenue is concerned may be regarded as reasonably satisfactory. As evidence of the reduced spending-power of the community first-class passenger journeys and revenue declined by 30·55 per cent. and 37·95 per cent. respectively, while second-class passenger journeys and revenue declined by 7·93 per cent. and 20·39 per cent. respectively.

The special Sunday fares in various areas were again popular with the travelling public, and the following figures show that these services have been meeting a very substantial demand.

Area.	Total Number of Passengers, 1932.	Total Number of Passengers, 1931.
Auckland-Hamilton .. .. .	36,078	40,535
Wellington - Palmerston North .. .. .	47,822	47,833
Christchurch-Timaru .. .. .	55,257	49,349
Dunedin-Oamaru .. .. .	32,133	33,749